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Michelle Paulman/DN
Terri Roseberry gets her hair styled by Stephanie Farley for Bujoun's fashion show during the Jan. 17 Wedding Fair at the Cornhusker Hotel.

Legalities abound before ceremony

By Anne Steyer
Staff Reporter

There is much more to getting hitched than jumping in the jalopy and waking up the preacher.

And it isn't just renting a hall and tuxedos, and hiring a caterer.

There are also those few legal matters that have to be taken care of, such as a blood test, name change (if it is so desired,) and the all-important marriage license.

The blood test is fairly simple: All that is needed is a premarital medical certificate showing results of a blood test for rubella. It can be administered at any doctor's office, the County Health Department, or the University Health Center.

The messy thing about this is that only the female participant in this commitment has to bear an arm and expose a vein.

Nebraska state law requires the female to be tested for rubella in order to protect future pregnancies. Contracting rubella during pregnancy can cause complications and put the fetus in danger.

The University Health Center will draw blood without an appointment, Doris Johnson, lab manager, said, but

the actual test is only run once a week. For the quickest results, Johnson recommended coming in Monday through Wednesday. Results would then be available Friday.

At this time, there is no mandatory AIDS test required in Nebraska.

If the bride-to-be (and/or the groom-to-be) decide to follow tradition and accept the name of the would-be spouse, the process gets more complicated.

The name change can only be done after the marriage license is issued and requires a mountain of paperwork — if every credit card, insurance company, subscription and government agency is contacted.

The first step is visiting the social security office at the friendly federal office building. There, with the official marriage certificate in hand, the proper application for a new card can be filled out. Issuing the new card takes approximately 10-14 days. There is no charge.

After that, it's off to the Drivers License Office to update information, take a new picture, spend another \$5 and receive a new motor vehicle operator's license.

The most vital legal matter is the

actual marriage license. Without one, no wedding is complete — or legal.

Luckily, this process is simpler than the blood test, less painful, and more in the spirit of marriage: It requires both partners.

Applications can be picked up at the County Clerk's Office. Applicants must show proof of identity and age: A drivers license and certified birth certificate are acceptable. Two forms of identification are necessary for both parties.

The proof of age is necessary, because if either the bride or the groom is under 19, a notarized consent form must be shown.

No one under 17 will be issued a marriage license in the state of Nebraska.

Applicants must also supply parents' names and birthplaces. Be sure to get both mothers' maiden names.

The license must be purchased in the state the marriage is to be performed. It does have an expiration date — without the signature of the participants and the officiant of the ceremony, it's good for one year. And it costs \$10.

With all the legalities out of the way, rev up the engine and wake the preacher.

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